



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

JANUARY 2013 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

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Pervasive justice system shortcomings shame Michigan



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

I'd like to wish you all a happy New Year and write a column about all the wonderful adventures in store for us, but there are so many shortcomings in the Michigan justice system that demand immediate attention that I must address them right now while the legislature is working on reform. The legislature is working on adjustments that will result in lighter caseloads for public defenders, which theoretically will afford better representation for indigent clients. Dysfunctional court clerks and computers, abusive bonding procedures, incentives for keeping people in the system, and a general lack of information about the jail and court procedures also need addressing.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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What the professionals say

Judge Tom Boyd, representing the Michigan District Judges Association (MDJA), says the MDJA supports the reform bill, HB 5804, and that "change is necessary." He said that throwing money at the problem was not the solution, and that looking at various metrics, as the bill suggests, would lead in the right direction. He also pointed to the fact that many cases do not go to trial and that the system needs more safeguards than are currently in place in order to ensure the fairest outcome for those involved.

This position was countered by Robert Daddow, deputy Oakland County executive, who said the County supports the need for improvements in the system but not the bill itself. "Quality standards need to be placed at the front end of the process, not the back end," Mr. Daddow said.

Rep. Tom McMillin, R-Rochester Hills, got to the heart of the matter when he said, "When it comes to budget season at the counties, you've got the elected sheriff, you've got the elected prosecutor – you've got people fighting for their budget. There's nobody fighting there for the indigent defense.

"It's a big deal. I think that we need to make sure it's being done right, as much as we can, in this state. We need to understand how this is going and what standards should be met to make sure that their system isn't locking away people who shouldn't be locked away, and charging us 35-grand a year to do it."

First-hand experience

Like most of you, I had no personal experience with courts, public defenders or bail bondsmen until last summer when one of our vendors was arrested in Belleville, part of Wayne County. She was accused of attacking someone. Her story was that he tried to violate her and she defended herself. She got no counseling or medical attention but was dragged into court where her public defender pushed her to accept a plea bargain that she thought meant she could leave right away and get back to her baby. When she later understood that was not the case, she was very distraught and asked to withdraw the plea.

Thanks to some generous Groundcover readers, I undertook getting her released on bail. That set me on a two-month odyssey during which my middle class expectations of convenience, transparency and fairness were shattered.

I looked into posting bail, which was

set at 10 percent of \$10,000. The bail bondsman would post bail for a fee of \$330, if that was accompanied by an agreement of liability for the whole bond from two full-time working adults and the rights to a fully-owned automobile, should the bail conditions be violated. They also demanded that someone be with them when they posted bail to accept custody of the person upon their release.

This seemed absurd. We were still taking all the risk and inconvenience, and paying them a lot of money just for fronting two-thirds of the cost. I tried to learn more about the process of posting bail, but found none of my lawyer friends or any of the public defenders or prosecutors I called could explain the risks and process in more than vague terms, nor was the information on the Wayne County website. I did learn that if our vendor did not show up for any court proceeding or court-ordered procedure, the bail money would be in jeopardy. I also learned from the prison guards that there was no way to post bail electronically. You could use a credit card, but only on-site, and through a government approved third-party company that charges a hefty fee, on the order of 25 percent, which is disclosed in its entirety only once the transaction is in process. It rapidly became apparent that the "prison-industrial complex," as one of my lawyer friends refers to it, has little regard for the lives of those enmeshed in its system.

I learned from the guards at the jail that our vendor would not be released when bail was posted, since the court had ordered a tether and the tether department worked at their own pace during limited hours. They also told me I'd need to give them the name and phone number of the person she'd be staying with when she was released, and that she would be responsible for the \$100 tethering setup fee and an additional \$12-29 per day. Tethering has become commonplace even for those who are not flight risks and are already homeless.

Another volunteer and I went to the jail, toting our ten \$100 bills and address book. The guard expressed some surprise that we were posting bail ourselves, then told us that she had to run our vendor's name for outstanding warrants. Unfortunately, one turned up for failing to appear at a hearing in Washtenaw County that occurred while she was incarcerated in the Wayne County Jail and of which she had no knowledge. The guard explained that if we were to bond her out, instead of her being released after tethering, she would be transferred to Washtenaw County. If they kept her and she missed

any of the Wayne County-ordered appearances, we stood to lose the bail money. As we knew there was an evaluation that had to take place, we left without posting bail. There was no way for us to get a message to our vendor or to see her and explain the situation and get more details on the outstanding warrant.

I called and emailed the Wayne County court-appointed attorney for help in resolving the warrant and to get a firm date for the evaluation, but got no response from him and learned on a subsequent visit that he did not contact his client about it, either. The day before the next hearing date, I learned that a judge's convention conflicted with the hearing date and since the evaluation had still not been done, the hearing was postponed for another month. When I pressed the lawyer on the evaluation hold-up, he said that he had checked on it and the **records indicated that they had already done it, but actually had not.**

Even though there was no hearing, I drove into Detroit as planned to post bail, convinced this was the only way she would ever get the evaluation and an opportunity for an adequate defense. As it was during court hours, I had to post bail at the courthouse. When I tried to do so, they told me that it was **no longer 10 percent of \$10,000, but the entire \$10,000.** Sure that it was a mistake, I asked them to check. They tried, but only the judge, who was at the conference, and her clerk could give a definitive answer. By now it was 12:15 p.m., and the clerk was not answering her phone; they told me she had stepped out for a few minutes. At 12:30, I asked them to check again and find out if she had gone to lunch. They did and said they thought so, so I left for lunch, too. Back at 1:00, I asked them to check again. At 1:20, I saw a group of employees returning and asked them to check again. Finally, at 1:30, I got permission go to the clerk's work area and ask around myself. All the doors were locked but someone did answer when I knocked on the Administration door. She informed me that the courts closed between noon and two for lunch and that the clerk would return at two. I asked her to verify that since the judge was gone and perhaps the clerk took that Friday afternoon off. She assured me the clerk would return.

At 2:15, an employee in the Drug Court noticed me, asked how I was, and decided to help me in response to my declaration of frustration. He called the judge's secretary, who eventually emerged with a piece of paper detailing the various hearings that had taken

see WAYNE COUNTY, page 9

A sense of direction



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Pastor, Bethlehem United Church of Christ

I have a long-established pattern with cars. I buy small, manual transmission vehicles that are easy to park and economical on gas. And then with regular maintenance, I drive them as close to 300,000 miles as I can get. My ministry and personal life have long had their share of driving, so I cover that mileage in about a decade. I have just retired a car from the road at 262,402 miles. I would have driven it another year or so, but I am ready to have all-wheel drive underneath me, especially with another winter upon us.

These days a lot happens to car design in a decade. In my still small, economical, easy-to-park, manual transmission car that now has all-wheel drive, I no longer have windows that I can roll up and down by myself. I am enjoying the ability to adjust my side-view mirrors from inside the car, and the fact that the rear-view mirror changes its surface automatically as light gives way to dark is much appreciated. I wasn't sure that heated seats were necessary, but I am getting used to them, too. However, the new feature in this car that I most enjoy is the compass embedded in the rear-view mirror. I have a good sense of compass direction, but am fascinated with keeping track of the flow of the road beneath me that is as often SW or NE as it is true S or N.

Attending to the compass in my rear-

view mirror has made me ponder more often the subject of our internal compasses. What are the directions we pursue and why? What directions are preferred ones for us as we orient or reorient our lives? When I give thought to directions for my life based on my involvement with Groundcover News, this is how I would name the directions I want to return to when I feel lost or disoriented:

- Am I seeking the common good in a specific way or ways I can identify?
- Am I articulating what is important to me?
- Do I know a wide assortment of people?
- How do I draw strength and energy from those who are working on an issue with me?

- Do I appreciate and affirm the varied gifts that each one brings to the table?
- Will I name difficult subjects we tend to avoid as a culture?
- Have I told others the story of what we are up to together at Groundcover News?
- Will I keep at this effort or similar efforts over the long haul?

As we begin a new calendar year, I am more and more aware of the grace and the goodness we share as the community of Groundcover News. You are a part of decent and substantial direction in my life. On that sense of direction I rely. And so to you all I say, "Thank you!"

What we can do about mass shootings

by Susan Beckett

Natural calamities like hurricanes and earthquakes batter our bodies; man-made catastrophes like the mass shooting in Newtown's Sandy Hook Elementary School and genocidal wars batter our souls. We feel the connectedness of mankind and writhe in the discomfort of our powerlessness.

In her book Taking the Leap, Buddhist sage Pema Chodron shares this story and a reflection on how we can impact our world:

There was a story that was widely circulated a few days after the attacks of September 11, 2001, that illustrates our dilemma. A Native American grandfather was speaking to his grandson about violence and cruelty in the world and how it comes about. He said it was as if two wolves were fighting in his heart. One wolf was vengeful and angry, and the other wolf was understanding and kind. The young

man asked his grandfather which wolf would win the fight in his heart. And the grandfather answered, "The one that wins will be the one I choose to feed."

So this is our challenge, the challenge for our spiritual practice and the challenge for the world: how can we train right now, not later, in feeding the right wolf? How can we call on our innate intelligence to see what helps and what hurts, what escalates aggression and what uncovers our good-heartedness? With the global economy in chaos and the environment of the planet at risk, with war raging and suffering escalating, it is time for each of us in our own lives to take the leap and do whatever we can to help turn things around. Even the slightest gesture toward feeding the right wolf will help. Now more than ever, we are all in this together.

Thank you for feeding the right wolf when you bought this issue of Groundcover and took the time to read it.



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Sundays:

8:30 am and 10:00 am ~ Worship
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January 1 ~ Office & building closed.

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SWAMI'S DICTIONARY

Nonjudgment Day

A time when enough humans stop criticizing one another, that we achieve uncritical mass. A day when everyone wins beauty contests, and all lawyers disappear because our trials are over. **See Disarmageddon.**

-- Swami Beyondananda

A day with Aimee Ciccarelli, superwoman

by Stacey Balter
Groundcover Contributor

Early in November, I chose to spend a day shadowing a Groundcover vendor. The first thing that struck me about Aimee Ciccarelli was not the fuzzy purple socks, purple scarf, purple coffee mug, and purple eye shadow she wears, but the warmth and authenticity of her smile.

Aimee lived at the Delonis Center for three months before she was told to find housing elsewhere and consequently took up residence with her son. She is recuperating from knee surgery, but is still on the streets selling Groundcover with a seemingly endless abundance of energy. Aimee has been selling Groundcover since September, and has quickly become a super saleswoman, through her charm and charisma. “I try to compliment at least 50 people a day,” Aimee discloses, “in case someone is having a bad day. I figure hearing something nice will make them feel better.”

When Aimee isn't being a super saleswoman, she's being a super friend. Aimee has been taking care of a woman she met at the Delonis Center, who is an amputee, and when she needed care, Aimee volunteered.

Not only does she treat her friends with kindness, Aimee brings that

same respect to strangers on the street. She greets every person walking by with a cheerful compliment and sales pitch. Oftentimes, people engage in conversation with her, drawn in by her smile and cheer.

While she has faced much turbulence in the past, Aimee draws back from her negative emotions and turns them into something positive. Hanging from her purple walker are three bags filled with stuffed animals, which she donates to young children in remembrance of her son Jayden, who died of a heart defect. Although she has witnessed her fair share of hardships, Aimee jokes, “I like to say my blood type is ‘B positive.’”



For Aimee, selling Groundcover is also a way to brighten the lives of others.

After the suicide of her cousin, Chase Edwards, her aunt and uncle lobbied to get depression awareness taught in schools. Aimee tries to spread awareness in her own way, even going out of her way to compliment people who have no apparent interest in buying the paper, just so she can know

she made someone's day a little brighter. She has resolved to be a better friend to people going through a hard time, transforming the negativity from the past into a new cause for the future.

Bad things needn't be dragged along like heavy baggage, because according to Aimee, it's “water off a duck's back, turn the other cheek, and a kind word can turn away wrath.”

Aimee's genuine smile doesn't show the stings of people who passed her by, ignoring her completely, or occasionally threw a rude comment our way. This is because for every person who ignored her, another dozen stopped and chatted. We met a family who run a Donkey Rescue carrying a wooden stand with a toy donkey head on it out of the Kiwanis Center. We met a couple with two young children who immediately jumped on the free stuffed animals Aimee gives out.

“I love my job,” Aimee tells me, and although being a vendor comes with its abundant challenges, I can see why she does; we became a fond memory for every person who stopped by to talk, for every child carrying a new stuffed animal. By the end of the day, I was exhausted – and I'm not even the one recuperating from knee surgery! – but I was also heartened by all the encounters I've had, and the communal joy shared between Groundcover and the community.

Election reflection: a humorous look at why Romney lost

by Martin Stolzenberg
Groundcover Contributor

Part 1 of a three-part series—*Start-Up Time*

Now that some time has passed, it is appropriate to look back on the 2012 presidential campaign and gain some clarity on what occurred. So much happened, and often so quickly; as events unfolded it seemed like a blur — all “smushed” together. Now we can assemble this giant jig-saw puzzle, and see what it reveals.

President Obama rode easily into office in 2008, promising “change.” By 2012, many thought his uninspiring first term wasn't exactly the “change” they had in mind.

Going into the new campaign, Governor Romney had a lot going for him. He looks like someone sent from central casting to play the president. The guy with the ears that stick out looks like Alfred E. Neuman on the cover of *Mad Magazine*.

To top it off, Governor Romney was getting a boost from hundreds of millions of dollars pouring into his campaign from billionaire PAC political donations. This was a present from the conservative Supreme Court, which had just ruled that every dollar votes, not people.

As the campaign unfolded, the political analysts and talking heads kept babbling about what a close race it was. With all he had going for him, Governor Romney should have swept the Electoral College and won by 10 percentage points in the popular vote – instead of losing them both.

How did this occur?

It starts with the primaries. Indeed, Governor Romney was the best candidate from a Republican field that looked like a bunch of circus clowns coming out of a little old Volkswagen bug. Climbing out of the car there was Michelle Bachmann, Herman Cain, Newt Gingrich, Gus Johnson, Ron Paul, Tim Pawlenty, Rick Perry, Buddy

Roemer, Paul Ryan and Rick Santorum. John Huntsman, Jr., a moderate, didn't fit in the clown car – so his campaign quickly foundered.

Throughout the twenty primary debates – that is right, twenty – the candidates played the clown game: *Who can be the most conservative?* Governor Romney joined right in, even though he was known to be a moderate Republican.

All the clowns vowed they wouldn't vote for curtailed spending that would close 90 percent of the deficit, coupled with a modest 10 percent coming from increased taxes, including Governor Romney.

They probably wouldn't have voted for a tax bill that cut government

see MITT, page 12

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Art therapy engages PORT clients

by Greg Hoffman and Robert Salo
Groundcover Intern and Vendor

The Project Outreach Team (PORT) engages with people in creative ways, and now they are tapping clients' creativity to help them move past some of the difficulties in their lives. PORT is a community mental health agency that works with the homeless, addicted and mentally ill people in Washtenaw County. They have been widely acknowledged for their soccer team, SSPOUT.

At a retreat earlier in the summer, the staff recognized a need for more creative opportunities for client engagement that also provided therapeutic support. They gathered feedback from clients to get an idea of what types of engagement people would find exciting.

“I personally love to do arts and crafts,” commented Robert Salo, a participant in the new program. “I find it very calming and peaceful so I thought others might think so, too.”

Jessica Lusk, one of the three mental health nurses at PORT, was particularly interested in implementing an art therapy program because she had taken several art classes in the past and personally attests to the therapeutic effect that artistic expression can provide.

“I think it's a creative way for people to express themselves and develop interpersonal skills,” said Lusk. “It is a non-verbal way to express their feelings and emotions.”

Lusk said that art is a great way for clients to express themselves, especially individuals who have experienced significant trauma in their lives and are coping with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Using art as a medium, these individuals have an outlet to display what they often have



Cheerful artists show off the jewelry they made in PORT's new art therapy program.

difficulty articulating in words.

Lusk coordinates the art therapy program, which is held on Mondays from 1-2 p.m.

The program is still relatively new, and has not gained a lot of popularity yet, but there is a core group of attendees each week. Lusk also works alongside the PORT psychiatrists to provide mental health services to PORT's clients, including assistance with obtaining medications and coordinating with insurance providers to procure other medical and mental health services for clients.

People can participate in the art therapy program even if they are not PORT clients. PORT is located at 110 N. Fourth Avenue in downtown Ann Arbor.

“Nurse Jessica is looking forward to seeing you there,” quipped Salo.

PORT is looking for donations of art supplies to help develop the program and to make it more inclusive for new participants. Particularly, there is a need for acrylic paints and paint brushes. PORT is also looking for individuals who would be able to volunteer their time assisting with the art therapy program, especially if they have any experience teaching art. If you would like to contribute either art supplies or your time as a volunteer, please contact Jessica Lusk at (734) 323-5803, or email her at luskj@washtenaw.org.

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Book Review: Magical Horses

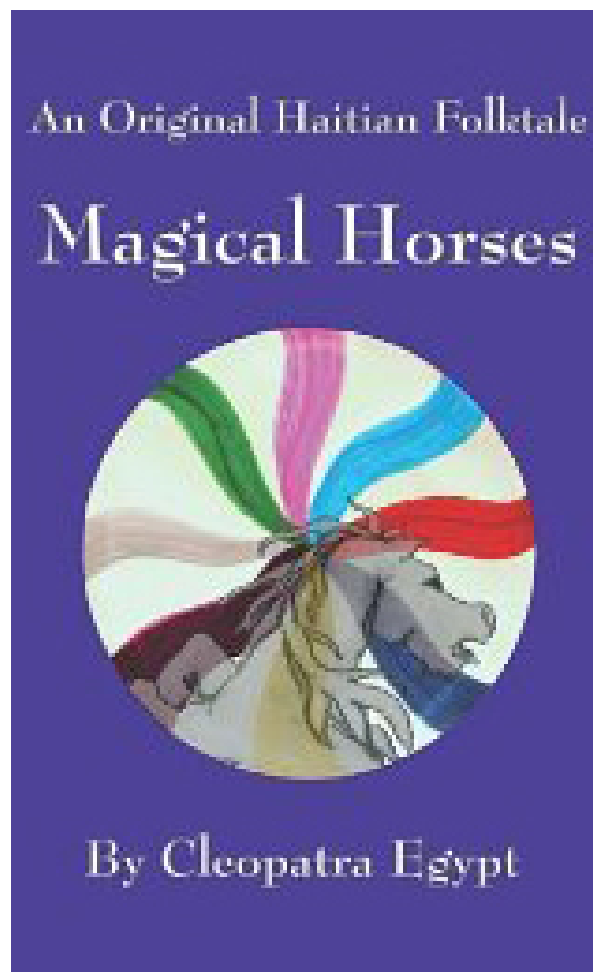
by Cleopatra Egypt
c. 2005 by NanoartHD
Review by Susan Beckett

(Ms. Egypt's autobiography is below)

Set in the realm of the Haitian spirits, this cautionary tale provides some insight into the traditional culture and beliefs of the island. It includes a detailed description of the eight principles of Vodou (Voodoo), each of which has an associated color, physical representation and special talent.

The story centers around Azaka, the Spirit of the fields, who is an arrogant and greedy farmer who neglects to express gratitude for the abundance in his life. He takes advantage of others and is rude to them. His horses, the Spirits of love and war, observe him learning to perform a vèvè ritual to honor Legba. When he neglects both the vèvè and the horses the following morning, they make the vèvè themselves and are transformed into human forms.

Azaka is frantic to get his horses back but spurns the offer of Gran Bwa, the Spirit of the forest who offers him the gifts of clarity and intuition in exchange for a daily offering. Though the Spirit of motherhood tells him, "The more you share, the more you'll receive" and



the Spirit of love does all she can to help him change for the better, Azaka cannot shed his mean-spirited ways and pays the price in the end.

The writing style is simple and in places the moralizing is transparent to the detriment of the action of the story. The actions of the Spirits have some complexity and bear discussion and examination. Magical Horses is a very quick read that might serve as an introduction to Haitian religion and culture, especially for middle school students.

After some poor financial choices and making the mistake of including my Brooklyn co-op apartment in my Chapter 7 bankruptcy in 1994, I was evicted. I started on a four-year homeless moving spree that took me to Santa Monica, California, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, Sedona, Arizona, back to Santa Monica, then Cambridge, Massachusetts, and finally, back to New York.

Thanks to the New York City Housing Authority, I was able to get a place of my own again in 2002. The rent is not high and it's based on my income. Having that sense of stability, I was able to write again. With the help of a close friend, I self-published a folktale – Magical Horses – that reflects a happier time of my childhood in Haiti.

My journey to author

by Cleopatra Egypt

I was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 1961 by the name of Antoine Marie Jasmin. Prior to coming to America in November 1971 with my family, my stepfather adopted me and I took on his last name, Prepetit. I graduated from St. John's University with a bachelor's degree in French Literature in January of 1986. Seven years later, I changed my name to Cleopatra Egypt for spiritual and cultural reasons.

The road to writing *Magical Horses* in 2005 was a difficult one. Trauma from physical and emotional abuse at the hands of my mother throughout my childhood and into adulthood made it very difficult for me to stay employed, and I earned very little as I dealt with the pressures of life and being a single mother.

More housing through lower standards

Dear Editor,

It needs to be easier to be poor in America. Laws are continually written to make housing and transportation better, of higher quality and safer. These laws also make housing and transportation more expensive because there is an inextricable correlation between high quality and high cost. There are arbitrary regulations in the name of quality that make housing extra expensive. There are excessively liability-conscious regulations in the name of safety that make occupancy prohibited.

I am a small-potatoes landlord. I own a couple of rental properties. I believe in building inspections. Over the years, I have grown in my appreciation for Building Inspectors. I have learned a great deal from the dozens of building and trade inspections I have paid for. I am very careful about maintaining my properties and keeping my Certificates of Occupancy current.

Certificates of Occupancy should be gradients and available for examination by prospective tenants. If a building does not have a Certificate of Occupancy, then the owner should be required to apprise prospective tenants of the limitations and unfulfilled requirements, but not prohibited from offering it for rent. Tenants may or may not want to live in a building that does not have a Certificate of Occupancy, but if they are old enough to sign a lease, then they are adults. Without a Certificate of Occupancy, owners of such buildings would be forced by market conditions to charge less rent. Prospective tenants, who would live there at their own risk, would expect to pay less rent. A partial political solution to homelessness – cheaper, legal housing – would be to legislate gradations of occupancy instead of on/off, black/white, certified or illegal current conditions.

Matthew Gutches

A local food community that is healthy for you

by Leonore Gerstein, Groundcover Contributor and Robert Salo, Groundcover Vendor

Have you ever wondered if grocery shopping could be a task you actually do just for the fun of it? Just as an experiment, go to the Ypsilanti Food Co-op (YFC). We are pretty sure you will discover that your experience was pleasant beyond all expectations.

Located in Depot Town, it is housed in the vintage Mill Works Building on spacious, tree-lined River Street. Nowadays, just before Christmas, the bare shade trees in front of the store are complemented by an array of fragrant seasonal fir trees and wreaths, arranged by co-op staffers Robert and Jordan. Inside, at any time of the year, the lighting is cheerful but not too bright, the atmosphere cozy, and the small-scale dimensions immediately inviting. Staff people greet you warmly, as does the smell of freshly-made soup (available, along with coffee, for a modest price). All that is missing to make this an old-fashioned village hang-out is a pot-bellied stove.

Elisabeth Daumer, who has been a member for 23 years, confirmed our first impressions, stating that what she likes especially about the co-op is the homey, welcoming atmosphere and the array of foods that are delicious as well as healthy. Those of you who are ecology-minded will admire the YFC for generating all of its own electric power from 30 photo voltaic (solar) panels on the roof.

A co-op is a nonprofit organization owned entirely by its member owners. The YFC is governed by a seven-member democratically elected board of directors, with the help of several committees. The board is responsible to the members for upholding the vision of the organization. Membership, also called a "fair share investment," costs \$200, payable over 10 years. Member owners enjoy the co-op's profits in the form of a discount at the register rather than a year's-end distribution, explained manager Corinne Sikorski. Membership is not required and everyone is warmly welcomed to shop at the co-op.

YFC stocks foods, personal care products and other items according to a set of harmonious values. Its mission and vision statement states: "YFC strives to provide our community with high quality food and consumer goods using ecologically sound methods, which promote sustainability and



Manager Corinne Sikorski in front of the Ypsilanti Food Co-op's neat, amply stocked shelves of nut butters and teas.

respect for the health and well being of the people that provide them...." In a less formal way, the statement adds, "(W)e love good food. We care about how it looks, how it tastes, what it contains, who grew it, where it was produced and how it was purchased." Sikorski added she loves providing great food and being "part of the big picture of changing the world and the environment" at the YFC.

At the co-op, you will find foods that are free of toxins and pesticides, many of which are organic. For the shoppers' sake and to benefit the whole community, YFC promotes local farmers' produce and other foods created in our area. Suppliers include 85 Michigan businesses, from Absopure Water, through Mamamofoods to Zingerman's, and 15 Michigan wineries/breweries. YFC collaborates with other local organizations, such as Growing Hope, whose mission is to make good nutrition accessible to all by developing local small-scale gardens, Think Local First, and other groups with shared community-minded values. Prices are competitive, sale items rotate, and you can save by buying some foods in bulk. Among other baked goods, you can choose one of the co-op's own sourdough breads, fresh from their brick-lined, wood-fired oven next door.

(The weekly baking schedule is posted at YFC's website.)

Chartered in 1975, YFC is the offspring of an earlier cooperative buying group that hauled a refrigerator from church to church every month in order to supply the community with fresh and inexpensive cheese and produce. It has "grown up" since its inception, especially with recently-added space, new equipment, and its artisan bakery next door. The co-op now has 800 members and has been expanding

its business at an astounding rate (40 percent from August 2011 to August 2012.) Under Sikorski's direction, employees and volunteers keep it humming.

YFC educates the public about the relationship between food and health, and to that end publishes a newsletter called Ypsi Mix. The current issue has a piece highlighting locally made gifts you might buy at the co-op, and another explaining the complexities of organic certification. On the sweeter side, the back page has a recipe for cranberry pistachio biscotti. And as part of its community outreach, the co-op hosts educational activities run by other local groups, such as cheese-making and natural egg-dyeing.

There's a fine website, www.ypsifoodcoop.org, where you can learn about the vision and history of the organization, educational activities, merchandise, outreach, and more. They have a Facebook page, too.

The YFC is at 312 North River Street in Depot Town and it is on the AATA bus route number 10. They are open seven days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and they hope all readers will stop by and shop there. For more information, please email info@ypsifoodcoop.org or phone (734) 483-1520.

Sudoku

***** 4puz.com

1	9		3			8		
		8						2
4			2	7				
3	6			5				
8				2				6
			9			7	1	
			1	2				3
2						1		
	3			7		2	5	

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote

“IYO UZI TZAS Z JNSBT BFZNF ZPI

UYUSPF IYO MTYYBS, JYN FTEB FTEPQ

FTZF XS MZHH ‘JZEHONS’ EB PYF FTS

JZHHEPQ KYXP, GOF FTS BFZIEPQ KYXP.”

– UZNI CEMRJYNK

ACROSS

1. Taj Mahal, for one

5. Turkish title

9. Throw out

14. Mountain range

15. Dry

16. Like some calendars

17. Street

18. Not well done

19. "_____ Rock 'n' Roll"

20. The Dancing _____

21. Fuel

22. Beetle _____

23. Calendar on which the new year occurs at the March equinox

25. Actress Lancaster

26. Goal

27. South American tuber

28. _____ tide

32. Actor Conrad

35. Hooklike

37. Cutting tool

38. New York theater ensemble (abbr.)

39. New beginning

41. Observe

42. _____ Tin Tin

43. Clap

44. Written work

46. Sister of Meg, Jo, and Amy

48. Pronoun

49. Singer Stone

50. Model Macpherson

52. Calendar on which the new year usually occurs in February

56. Publishing company CEO, Steve

59. Cooked taro root

60. Devoted

61. Musical work

62. Horse

63. Wizard

64. Duck

65. Gem

66. Norse god

67. White

68. Tennessee river

69. Salts (French)

DOWN

1. Flower

2. Speak

3. Estate

4. Consecrated

Calendars of the World

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20					21				22					
23				24				25						
			26			27				28	29	30	31	
32	33	34			35				36		37			
38				39	40						41			
42				43					44	45				
46			47		48				49					
			50	51			52				53	54	55	
56	57	58				59								
61					62					63				
64					65					66				
67					68					69				

5. Overseas

6. Jeweler's unit of weight

7. Throw

8. Chemical suffix

9. Inventor Howe

10. Predecessor of the Gregorian calendar

11. Organic compound

12. Mammoth _____ National Park

13. Low card

22. Brusque

24. Beginning of a book, for short

25. Become hardened to

27. Entrances

29. *The Big _____*

30. Figure skating jump

31. Rind

32. Part of speech

33. Pennsylvania city

34. Common contraction

35. Dwindle

36. Pepper

40. Contents of Pandora's box

45. Power generators

47. Calendar on which the new year usually occurs in September

49. Buckler

51. Berkeley professor Timothy

52. Marine skeleton

53. Avoid

54. Seal

55. _____ Edge, country band

56. Opponents

57. Village in Poland

58. Make a correction

59. Father

62. Disorderly group

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

Wayne County Courts would fail as private enterprise

continued from page 2

place and conditions that resulted from them. He pointed to a hearing in Van Buren Township at which bail was set at \$10,000 and said that was the court that would have to change the bail amount. He confirmed my suspicion that the clerk was not returning.

I went to the nearby party store and got another money order so our vendor would be able to call me and find out what happened. As I headed toward Van Buren Township, I called the court for directions. The clerk I spoke with asked why I was coming and told me I had been misinformed, that the case in question now belonged to the Wayne County District Court and they had no jurisdiction over bail or anything else.

I accepted a call from our vendor and told her what had transpired. She called back an hour later to say she checked with the guards at the jail and bail really was \$1,000 **but the court computer had not been updated**. She begged me to come back, which I could not do that day. However, I did stop by on Sunday on my way to another engagement. I arrived at 2, and was told that a shift change took place between 2 and 3 but I'd be first on the list at 3. Unable to wait, I called on my way home around 8:30 and learned that there were already so many people waiting to post bail that no more would be taken until the new shift started at 11:00 p.m.

I returned Monday afternoon at 3:45 so I could deal with the jail instead of the court but at a time when the jail had several bond officers working and no shift change was imminent. For the first time, I was informed that if bail conditions were violated, I was liable for the entire \$10,000. Though it gave me pause, I proceeded anyway because of the lack of viable alternatives. Then I had to wait for a response from the Washtenaw County sheriff as to whether they coming to get her. If not, she would need to be tethered and they would need the name of the person she would be staying with. I offered to provide the name and contact information so they would have what they needed in either case, since there was no scenario under which she would be free to leave with me. They told me I still had to wait. Finally, at 6:00, it was determined that the Sheriff was coming and that I could go. She would be returned to Wayne County for tethering once Washtenaw was done with her.

She had a hearing in Washtenaw County on Tuesday and was returned to Wayne County on Wednesday. As of the following Tuesday, she remained in jail awaiting a tether. After many calls from us inquiring as to the holdup, I learned

that **the jail had lost the bond receipt** and had therefore not given the final okay to the tethering unit. They assured me they would proceed once I provided them with a copy of the receipt. At least they allowed me to do so electronically.

Again her release was delayed and she was transferred to Washtenaw County again for a pre-trial hearing on another matter. She was released on personal recognizance from Washtenaw County but returned to Wayne County on Friday for tethering. As of Monday, she was still in jail for no apparent reason. After several calls from me, a sergeant took a personal interest in her release.

She had another hearing on Tuesday, but it was conducted in chambers without the client present. A public defender whom she had never met “represented” her.

On Wednesday it was revealed that her release was delayed because **the paperwork from the court was missing** and there was a question about whether she really needed a tether, and if so, what kind. Judge Thomas’ clerk was out again and the substitute clerk could not locate the records requested by sergeant. (Note that even the regular clerk was unable to locate records from court hearings on the days she was out, which happened at least twice in this case.) The clerk was out again on Thursday, but luckily, the police discovered the problem: **her paperwork had been stapled to that of another prisoner**, so the police didn’t know they had it until they looked through the other prisoner’s paperwork. (She believes it was a deliberate act of retribution since she had filed official complaints about her treatment in the court.)

She was then given some flip-flops for her feet and promptly transferred to the Hamtramck station for tethering. They **did not return her personal property, which included her driver’s license**. The remaining \$14 in her commissary account was applied to tether fees.

At Hamtramck, they fitted the tether and told her she had to be inside her Ann Arbor address by 6 p.m. Without a state ID, she could not take public transportation even if she could find someone to buy the ticket for her. More forms needed to be filled out and signed, but because of the late time of day, they told her to return on Monday, and added that she could retrieve her driver’s license from the jail then, though it is a mystery how they expected her to get there. They let her use a phone to arrange a ride. She was given paperwork for the tether but none about her upcoming court appearances

or any other bond conditions.

Fortunately, she was able to reach a woman she had met in jail who had a car and agreed to drive her in exchange for \$30 which could be obtained once they reached Ann Arbor, thanks to the donation of one of our readers.

The next day we drove to the jail to get her ID and to the tether unit to turn in the remaining paperwork and get the paperwork on her release conditions. **The release conditions and upcoming court appearance paperwork were missing**. The officer was able to find the court appearance in the computer records and we wrote it down.

Once released, she learned from a friend that the man she was charged with assaulting, who she says attacked her first, was in jail for a similar assault on another individual. An internet search on his name revealed a history of such behavior on his part. **The police and her attorney had failed to do even that simple amount of investigating**.

She reiterated her desire to plead not guilty to the charges, but received no encouragement from her lawyer, who she had tried to have replaced. She expected the hearing on the 12th to be a review of the evaluation, but the judge wanted to proceed to sentencing. When she protested her innocence and desire for a trial, **the judge cautioned against it, saying she would be tried for attempted murder**, though that had never before been considered, and returned to jail.

Knowing she could not afford a private attorney and having already experienced the vindictiveness of the criminal justice system, she agreed to a sentence of time served and 15 months of probation. She later learned that **the cost of her probation, \$600, was being passed on to her along with a fee of \$400 for the attorney she was not allowed to fire** and other assorted fees prorated into payments of approximately \$100 per month for more than a year.

Getting the bail money returned was another ordeal, requiring six phone calls to get someone to explain the process. It would take another personal appearance at the court to get a bond release form to present to the clerk so they could start the 6- 8 process of preparing a check that would eventually be sent by mail. I called ahead to be sure that the person I

needed to see would be in the court when I was planning to go. I was told they could only guarantee to be there first thing in the morning. I could not get someone to check and make sure the paperwork was in order. I went as planned and was told to return another day since **the computer was down**. I stubbornly insisted that since I had the original bond paperwork with all the conditions on it, they should be able to use the paper files and forms to process me. To my amazement, after 40 minutes of stalling, they complied. The last shock came when the clerk informed me that **the check would be for \$900 instead of \$1,000**, since there was a 10 percent charge for posting a 10 percent bond. That was not on the paperwork, nor was it ever mentioned, even by the thorough bond officer at the jail.

There are so many aspects to this that disturb me. My hope is that at least the most egregious will be addressed in upcoming state reforms. My suggestion is that they include metrics on attorneys meeting with their clients prior to going to court to discuss a defense, not just determine a likely plea deal. Oversight should extend to the courts with scrutiny applied to the trail of records and paperwork in those counties like Wayne where it is a pervasive problem. Metrics on the length of time in jail prior to sentencing and the time elapsed between tests being ordered by the court and reported back should be tracked and benchmarked with penalties for consistently exceeding them. Complaints should be investigated, reported and replied to, and the county’s website should make it easy to register a complaint or ask a question.

The bail, jail, tether and probation systems appear to be self-serving money-makers with a vested interest in having their services used widely at the expense of those who are accused. At the very least, there should be fair standards for their use and no charges should be incurred by those who are innocent. And, above all, coerced plea bargains have got to stop.

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcov-

er News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not “hard sell,” threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: contact@groundcovernews.com 734-972-0926

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Lyrics offer insight, reveal crossroads



by Danielle Mack
Groundcover Vendor

I wish I could personally thank all of you who voted my December 2010 article about transsexual etiquette into the “Best Of” edition of Groundcover. It is a new year, and time for a new article series from me to you.

It is my understanding that many people wonder why transsexuals are the way they are; if they are crazy, why they want to go through all that they do, and so on. I hope to provide answers to those questions through a short series of my memoirs, starting with this one.

I was sitting down on my bed looking through my music collection on my computer when I realized that there was one Leann Rimes album that was missing from my collection: Sittin’ On Top Of The World. LeAnn Rimes was one of the first non-Christian music artists I was ever allowed to listen to, and only after an aunt and uncle recommended her to my parents. That LeAnn Rimes CD was the third non-Christian CD I ever owned and proved to be one of my favorites. I was 18 at the time – a senior in high school – and the CD was her latest release. It happened to come out during a key point in my life. I was just starting to be exposed to the non-Christian world.

When I got this CD, I was just starting to let my female self “out of the closet.” Up until then I had always dressed in private, borrowing my mom’s clothes. I was finally beginning to reach out and look for information on who and what I was. I was starting to go out and buy my own female clothes.

I recently looked for this CD on Amazon and found it for \$0.01 plus \$2.98 for shipping! I was so excited when it came in the mail. I had not heard it since I lost my original back in 1999 or 2000. I could not help but wonder what treasure troves its music would unlock from the vaults of my mind. I ripped into the packaging before I even left the school office where I receive my mail. It was such a thrill to finally have this album in my hands again after so many years. I was lost as to what to do next. I opened the case and looked at the CD sitting there, and could feel the whispers of lost and forgotten memories starting to ripple and move beneath the surface of my conscious mind, anxious to escape and reveal themselves again. Just looking at

the cover art, seeing LeAnn in her black top with the sheer lace sleeves... I had seen girls in school with similar tops and always wanted one for myself.

Looking through the case sleeve, I saw and remembered so many different hair, makeup and clothing styles that I had always wanted to try for myself. I had always wished that I had been born and raised as a girl so that I could wear those things and just be a normal girl in high school. Fourteen years ago this is the kind of girl I was and wanted to be – and in a way still strive to be – and the beautiful fairytale design of the CD itself brought a flood of so many fairytale dreams that flowed through my mind back then.

I find it interesting that, as I listened to the CD for the first time in over a decade, I still experienced feelings associated with some songs as if they were a shadow of the old feelings, while other songs evoked entirely new ones.

The song “Looking Through Your Eyes” used to have a lot more meaning to me. I still find it to be a very beautiful and lovely song, but it lacks the significance it used to have. Maybe I have lived too much. Maybe the part of me that used to believe in the words of that song has been through so much it has just lost the ability to see things from that perspective. However, I must say that as I hear that song and force myself to pay attention to the lyrics as I once did, bits and pieces of its meaning are coming back.

The song “Commitment” was a song that I always loved. It used to move my heart to singing, and it still has that power, though to a lesser degree. I do feel it taking a strong hold in my heart again. I think it has maintained its hold on me because of what it is about - commitment is such a permanent part of my personality. I commit to my causes, what I believe in, to my friends. Commitment was one of the core values of my campaign in the Democratic Primaries of 2010 for County Commissioner of District 10. Commitment is also something that I value very highly and look for in a person I might date.

One song that has found new meaning for me is “Feels Like Home.” In the past this song had little meaning. I had a home, a shadow of a home, but a home nonetheless. It was all I knew. Now the words of the song have so much more significance. I have been without a home; I have lived on the streets. I had a tent that had the emotional warmth and love of a home, but lacked the

see CHANGE, page 11

January Calendar of Events

January 1/8/15/22/29 – Tuesday Resume Clinics, 9-11 a.m. Washtenaw County Michigan Works! Career Transition Center, Key Bank Building, 2nd Floor, 301 West Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti. More info: call (734) 544-6799; TDD (800) 649-3777.

January 10 – Groundcover Volunteer Meeting, 7-8:30 p.m. Bethlehem UCC, Room F1 (elevator to B), 423 S. 4th Ave., Ann Arbor. More info: contact@groundcovernews.com, or call (734) 972-0926.

January 18-19 – “24-Hour Peace Generator” Monthly World-Healing Peace Circle, 6 p.m. Fri - 6 p.m. Sat. Silent prayer or focused meditation toward peace, understanding, joy, and healing. Drop in anytime. Refreshments provided. Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd., Ann Arbor. More info: www.peacegenerator.org, or email info@peacegenerator.org.

January 18-19 – 2013 SAAN Social Justice Conference, “ETHOS: Progressing From a Mindset of Stigma to Solidarity,” 5-11 p.m. South Asian Awareness Network hosts the nation’s largest South Asian undergraduate conference, featuring prominent individuals from across the country for a weekend of workshops, keynote speeches, and panels. Registration at door is \$45, \$35 for students. U-M Michigan League and Rackham Buildings. More info: www.umsaan.org, or call (734) 936-1055.

January 21-28 – MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MEMORIAL WEEK. Celebrate the life and legacy of the great leader and engage with others about current social justice issues. Community events throughout Washtenaw County include lectures, book groups, art exhibits, live music. See below for highlights; for complete listing of events, visit annarbor.com.

Key MLK, Jr.-related Events (all free):

1/21 – U-M MLK Memorial Symposium Keynote Memorial Lecture, 10 a.m. Notable author and founder of the Southern Law Poverty Center, Morris Dees, delivers kickoff speech on this year’s Symposium theme, “R(E)volution of the Dream.” Hill Auditorium.

1/21 – Black History 101: Mobile Museum, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. Exhibit with over 150 artifacts documenting the Black experience from slavery to Obama’s election. Michigan Union Art Lounge (1st floor).

1/21 – Panel Discussion: “Mental Health and Incarceration,” 12:30-3 p.m. Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) hosts a panel discussion on the mental health needs of incarcerated and returned citizens. Michigan Union (Pendleton Room).

1/21 – Storytelling: “Imagine the Possibilities – What If...?” 1-3 p.m. Dr. Steve L. Robbins draws on life experiences to shed humorous and

inspiring light on his unique concept of “unintentional intolerance.” Rackham lobby.

1/21 – Lecture: “Impediments to the Dream: The Prison-Industrial Complex and the Dream,” 2-4 p.m. Author of The Meaning of Freedom Dr. Angela Davis considers the possibility of a world without prisons and discusses alternatives to the American prison-industrial complex. Michigan Union (Rogel Ballroom).

1/21 – Lecture: “Urban Renewal and the Promise of King’s Dream,” 4 p.m. Speaker Cory A. Booker, Mayor of Newark, NJ, shares insights from his city’s inspiring story of regeneration. Hutchins Hall (Room 100).

1/21 – Lecture: “Behind the Dream: The Making of the Speech that Transformed a Nation,” 6 p.m. Speaker Clarence B. Jones served as an advisor and speechwriter for Dr. King. Ross School of Business (Blau Auditorium).

1/22 – Lecture: “Gay Rights: A Civil Rights Success Story?” 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Speakers evaluate the success of gay Americans’ pursuit of equal rights. Michigan Union Ballroom.

1/22 – Lecture: “Race and Art: A Case Study from Winslow Homer,” 5:15 p.m. Talk by Peter H. Wood, emeritus professor of history at Duke University. U-M Museum of Art (Helmut Stern Auditorium).

1/22 – Lecture: “All Men Are Created Equal; Some Just Treat Women Differently,” 6 p.m. Speaker Alan J. C. Jones explores the issue of sexual assault. Michigan League Ballroom.

1/22 – Screening and Panel Discussion: “Detropia,” 6:30-8:15 p.m. Student Center Auditorium, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

1/23 –Screening and Panel Discussion: “Black and Blue: The Story of Gerald Ford, Willis Ward, and the 1934 Michigan - Georgia Tech Football Game,” 4-6 p.m. Former Senator Buzz Thomas and Steven Ford (son of President Gerald Ford) lead discussion following documentary. U-M Weill Hall (Annenberg Auditorium 1120).

1/26 – Lecture: “Affordable Care Act: Evolution of Senior Health,” 1-3 p.m. Turner Senior Resource Center, 2401 Plymouth Rd (Suite C), Ann Arbor.

1/29 – Panel Discussion: “Not Seen and Not Heard: Addressing Childhood Poverty,” 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Scholars address what is being done in this country to address childhood poverty. Michigan Union Ballroom.

January 27 – Trio Abelia, 3 p.m. Jazz trio of U-M faculty performs a variety of works. Free. Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 423 S. 4th Avenue, Ann Arbor. More info: (734) 996-5508.

Remembering their passing

by Susan Beckett

A vigil to remember the homeless people who passed away in 2012 was arranged by the Vineyard Church mission and Project Outreach Team (PORT). The winter solstice evening gusts nixed the candle lights at Liberty Park and the perils of the season were in full force. John Loring of PORT gathered the group and led a few moments of memory and reflection. Vineyard’s truck was there with gear to help folks protect themselves from the cold this winter.

Mary Ann Trainor, a stalwart member of the Vineyard outreach team, recalled one of those who passed last year. Her eyes grew teary as she spoke of “Santa Claus Joe,” whose real name might have been Joe Morenci. According to Trainor, he had lived on the streets for a

very long time and was a regular at Pizza in the Park on Friday nights. He had his struggles with alcohol but no matter what state he was in, he was always kind and grateful.

A veteran, Joe registered with the Veterans Administration (VA) near the end of his life, just before he got sick and was admitted to the VA where he eventually died. He had no next of kin and was buried with honors at the VA cemetery. A nurse at the VA reported that he was all cleaned up and nice looking before he was laid to rest.

“It brings tears to my eyes because he was such a nice guy; a real gentleman,” said Trainor.

Interpretations change

continued from page 10

physical qualities of home. I have been through a great many more dark spots in life than I had when I first owned this CD.

Now I have emotional warmth that is continuing to grow by leaps and bounds. My current home is an apartment-style dorm room, and by definition temporary, but at least it has the appearance of a traditional home. I am even celebrating Christmas with family – first cousins – for the first time in over six years! My parents and I may not be celebrating together yet, but at least we are starting to find common ground. I got a gift from them for Christmas this year that was at the top of my list that I never told anyone about. One small step at a time.

All I need now is my sexual reassignment surgery, my bachelor’s degree, a teaching job and a more traditional home and I will be set. I graduated with honors from WCC this past May with an associate’s degree in elementary education. Now I am at

EMU working on my bachelor’s in special education / hearing impairment. Alaska is in dire need of teachers and pays really well. With Michigan’s lack of white Christmases, I think I may try my chances up there after graduation. A traditional home may be a bit too far off, but raising the funds for my surgery is something I am working for now.

Some friends of mine and I have teamed up to create a fundraiser to help raise funds for my surgery. If this fundraiser works, I plan to use the same methods to try and help other homeless and low-income transsexuals get their surgeries done. You can donate to my cause and find all the information at: www.giveforward.com/helpabeautifuldaughter?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=fb_wall&utm_campaign=vanity_page&og_action=hug&fb_ref=546869.



Vigil remembering Washtenaw County homeless people who passed away in 2012.

Unknown numbers frozen to death

by Peggy Donham
Groundcover Vendor

Drinking coffee at a local café and reading in the December 4, 2012 edition of *USA Today* about homeless people living outside during winter months, I was appalled to hear the Center for Disease Control and Prevention say that no one tracks hypothermia deaths among the homeless.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, over the course of the year there are 1.5 million people who spend at least one night in shelters. It is estimated that there are 643,000 chronically homeless people in this country, many of whom are children.

I’ve been connected to the homeless community for almost 13 years now, in one way or another. I have experienced being homeless two times in those years, and I am thankful that my housing is now stable and I have supports in place to keep myself secure in that housing. I have made many friends who are chronically homeless because of numerous reasons – alcohol, drug addiction, or most distressing of all, mental illness. It seems to me every winter there is someone in this community who freezes to death.

I have struggled with depression for what seems like my whole life, and in the past 23 years have been able to get help and move towards a better life for myself. I am fortunate to not have had an addiction, but depression has greatly affected my life and

my homelessness was a result of that.

On one March evening when I was homeless I had only a utility truck to sleep in. I felt extremely depressed as I tried to stay warm with the few blankets to protect me from the cold. I would cry every night, wondering how I got to this place. Many nights I would wake up shivering because I was not able to stay warm enough to sleep. It was one of the most difficult times in my life, and I believe that’s part of why I feel so connected to those friends I’ve made who live, day to day, on the street.

Reading that story in the newspaper, I felt deeply sad and angry at the thought that not even our government can count the poor souls who die from what seems a sad and lonely way to go. I understand it takes time and man-hours to count these people, but I can’t help but feel, more now than ever, that they are considered not important enough to even give them a number when they pass.

I choose to believe in the good in people. I’ve seen, firsthand, the genuine caring of people, especially in this community; the individuals who clothe, feed, and care for the homeless. I can say that their help, kindness and love have made a difference in my life. My hope is that, at some point, there will be someone to count those who now remain countless.

Cryptoquote Solution

“You may have a fresh start any moment you choose, for this thing that we call ‘failure’ is not the falling down, but the staying down.”
– Mary Pickford

T	O	M	B		A	G	H	A		E	J	E	C	T
U	R	A	L		B	R	U	T		L	U	N	A	R
L	A	N	E		R	A	R	E		I	L	O	V	E
I	T	O	S		O	I	L		B	A	I	L	E	Y
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			E	N	D		A	N	U		N	E	A	P
V	E	I	D	T		A	D	U	N	C		A	X	E
E	R	S		R	E	B	I	R	T	H		S	E	E
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			E	L	L	E		C	H	I	N	E	S	E
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E	I	D	E	R		O	P	A	L		O	D	I	N
S	N	O	W	Y		B	A	L	D		S	E	L	S

1	9	2	3	6	5	8	4	7
7	5	8	9	4	1	6	3	2
4	3	6	2	7	8	5	1	9
3	6	1	7	5	4	2	9	8
8	7	9	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	2	4	8	9	6	3	7	1
9	4	5	6	1	2	7	8	3
2	8	7	5	3	9	1	6	4
6	1	3	4	8	7	9	2	5

Mitt's race to lose

continued from page 4

expenditures by two trillion dollars a year and raised millionaire taxes by one dollar! After all, you can't just raise taxes; that should be considered a crime, even when the country is drowning in debt.

Early on, the Democrats knew that Governor Romney would be the likely Republican candidate. They were licking their chops at the thought of it. *Bring him on.* They quickly defined Governor Romney in their advertising, even before he could establish his own image. He was portrayed as an out-of-touch money-grubber who destroyed jobs and flip-flopped.

Governor Romney survived this primary debacle and sailed into the nominating convention. Right off the bat, things went wrong. His campaign strategist, Stuart Stevens, suggested Clint Eastwood for a key speaker just before Governor Romney's nomination. The aging Clint proceeded to give

a disjointed speech, highlighted by talking to an empty chair and pretending it was President Obama. When asked if the speech had been "vetted," Mr. Stevens said that Clint had declined to reveal what he would say. Probably Mr. Stevens was afraid that, if asked too forcefully, Dirty Harry would have pulled out his trusty .44 Magnum and threatened, "Make my campaign."

When trying to obtain the nomination, Governor Romney had gone very conservative to appeal to the Party base who, everyone knows, are the only Republicans that vote in the primaries. Now he had to pivot from his conservative stance to reach a broader base of national voters. He did it about as gracefully as a klutzy adolescent boy taking ballet to impress the girls.

Governor Romney shook his Etch-a-Sketch, creating a clean slate, and filled it with a more moderate stance. Well, that is

sometimes. Then sometimes he would double back to his conservative self.

It seemed their campaign song could have been that old Ella Fitzgerald tune:

First you say you do, and then you don't, no, you don't,

And then you say you will, and then you won't, no you won't,

You're undecided now, so what are you gonna do?

What is he going to do? Governor

Romney's answer: "Trust me."

Trust him to do what?

The Obama campaign effectively started labeling these startling changes "Romnesia" as if the candidate had forgotten what he had said in the past.

It was going to get worse before it got better.

Look for Part 2: A Litany of Woes next month in the February issue of Groundcover News.



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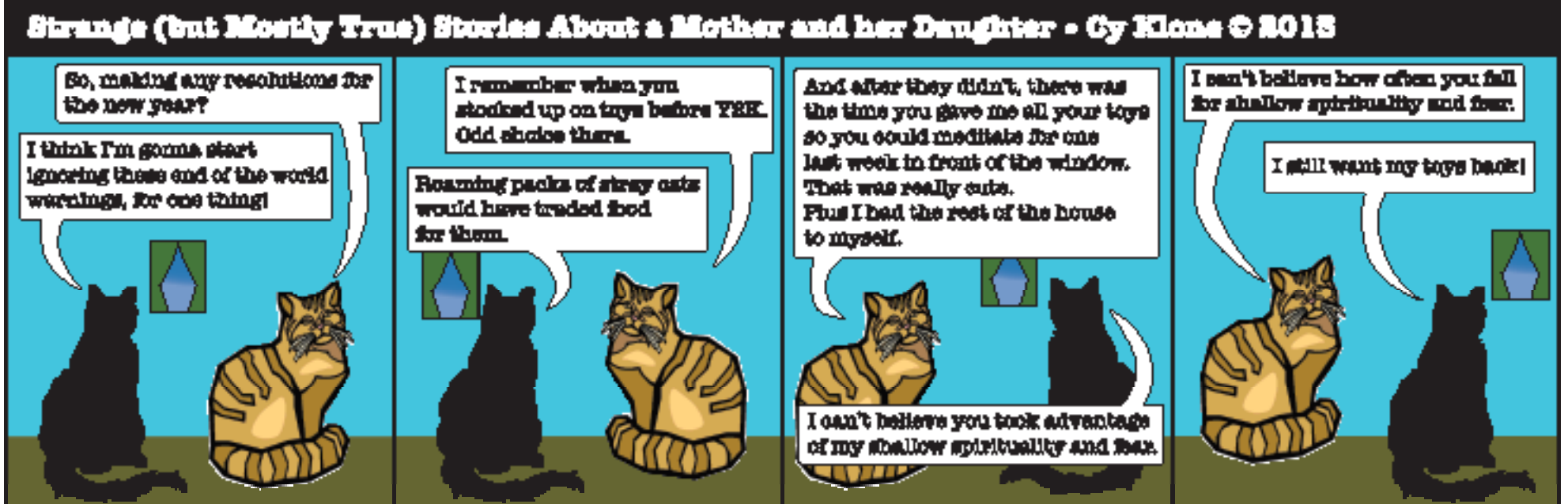
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